

THIS OPINION WAS NOT WRITTEN FOR PUBLICATION

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today (1) was not written for publication in a law journal and (2) is not binding precedent of the Board.

Paper No. 24

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte BOR-PING E. WANG, ELLIOT I. BANK
and RONALD A. EPSTEIN

Appeal No. 1997-0186
Application No. 08/314,568

ON BRIEF

Before WINTERS, HANLON, and KRATZ, Administrative Patent Judges.

HANLON, Administrative Patent Judge.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is an appeal under 35 U.S.C. § 134 from the final rejection of claims 1-22, all of the claims pending in the application. The claims on appeal are directed to a catalyst

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component for polymerizing ethylene formed by a particular process. Claim 1 is representative and reads as follows:

1. A catalyst component for ethylene polymerization formed by:

- (1) initially reacting a metal oxide support with an organomagnesium compound to form a supported organomagnesium composition;
- (2) reacting the supported organomagnesium composition with an alkoxy silane;
- (3) contacting the product from step (2) with a chlorinating reagent; and
- (4) contacting the product from step (3) with a liquid titanium halide.

The references relied upon by the examiner are:

Johnstone	4,396,533	Aug.
2, 1983		
Wang et al.	5,244,853	Sep. 14,
1993		
Furuhashi et al. (EP '524)	0,208,524	Jan. 14,
1987		
(Published European Patent Application)		

The following rejections are at issue in this appeal:

(1) Claims 1-4, 6-14 and 16-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as being based on a nonenabling disclosure.

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(2) Claims 3 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.¹

(3) Claims 1-22 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,244,853 to Wang in view of Johnstone.

(4) Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over EP '524.

Grouping of claims

According to appellants, for purposes of this appeal, the claims are grouped as follows (Brief, p. 3):

(1) with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, claims 1-4, 6-14 and 16-22 stand or fall together;

(2) with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, claims 3 and 14 stand or fall together;

(3) with respect to the obviousness-type double patenting rejection, claims 1-22 stand or fall together; and

(4) with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103, claims 1-22 stand or fall together.

¹Claims 7, 10, 11, 18, 21 and 22 were also finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. However, that rejection was withdrawn by the examiner. See Paper No. 21, p. 2 and Paper No. 23, p. 2.

Discussion

A. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

EP '524 discloses a catalyst component useful for polymerizing olefins, especially alpha-olefins such as propylene (p. 2, lines 2-6). According to EP '524, the catalyst component exhibits outstanding catalytic performance, such as high activity and high stereoregularity, and is prepared by (EP '524, p. 2):

[C]ontacting (A) a metal oxide, (B) a dihydrocarbyl magnesium, and (C) a hydrocarbyloxy group-containing compound with one another, contacting the thus obtained contact product with (D) a halogen-containing alcohol, and finally contacting the thus obtained contact product with (E) an electron donor compound and (F) a titanium compound

The examiner's position is predicated on separate theories. First, the examiner interprets claim 1 narrowly to exclude the electron donor compound of EP '524. Alternatively, the examiner interprets claim 1 broadly to include the electron donor compound of EP '524. The examiner argues that (Answer, p. 7):

Appellants' composition would have been obvious . . . because it is well settled that deletion of a component and its' concomitant function is not unobvious. In re Hamilton, 160 U.S.P.Q. 199. Furthermore, appellants' claims are not closed to

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the presence of other substances. As a result, the claimed catalyst fails to be patentably distinct from that disclosed by EP 0,208,524.

Appellants argue that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been inclined to eliminate the electron donor compound from the process disclosed in EP '524 since the electron donor contributes important properties to the catalyst component produced thereby. Appellants also argue that adding an electron donor compound to the claimed invention would change the nature of the catalyst component.

Before we reach the obviousness issue, we must determine the metes and bounds of claim 1. According to appellants (Brief, p. 2):

As most broadly defined in Claim 1 and described at page 3, lines 17-24 of the pending application, the catalyst component of the instant invention is formed by: (1) initially reacting a metal oxide support with an organomagnesium compound to form a supported organomagnesium composition; (2) reacting an organo- magnesium compound with a tetraalkyl silicate; (3) contacting the resulting product with a chlorinated reagent; and (4) contacting the resulting product with a liquid titanium compound containing halogen.

Appellants' arguments are consistent with the specification. Namely, the specification does not contemplate

the addition of any compounds in the formation of the disclosed catalyst component other than those compounds specifically recited in claim 1. Therefore, we interpret claim 1 as limited to catalyst components produced solely by the four steps recited therein. Consequently, the addition of an electron donor as disclosed in EP '524 is excluded from the claimed invention.

Next, we consider the obviousness of the claimed invention in view of the teachings of EP '524. The examiner appears to be relying on a per se rule to support the rejection based on 35 U.S.C. § 103. Specifically, the examiner maintains that "deletion of a component and its' concomitant function is not unobvious" (Answer, p. 7). However, there are no per se rules of obviousness. Rather, in an obviousness determination, each case must be evaluated on its facts. See In re Ochiai, 71 F.3d 1565, 1572, 37 USPQ2d 1127, 1133 (Fed. Cir. 1995) ("reliance on per se rules of obviousness is legally incorrect and must cease").

In view of the teachings of EP '524, one having ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the addition of an

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electron donor compound is an essential step in the formation of a catalyst component exhibiting outstanding catalytic performance. Therefore, we find no motivation or suggestion in EP '524 to eliminate the electron donor from the disclosed process. For this reason, the rejection of claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is reversed.

B. Obviousness-type double patenting rejection

Claims 1-22 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5 of U.S. Patent No. 5,244,853 to Wang in view of Johnstone.

The sole argument advanced by appellants relates to the propriety of the examiner's reliance on the Johnstone patent in the rejection based on obviousness-type double patenting. Specifically, appellants argue that "it is impermissible in the instant fact situation to cite a second patent [(Johnstone)] as a necessary part of an obviousness double patenting rejection" (Brief, p. 6). We disagree.

The court in In re Longi, 759 F.2d 887, 892-93, 225 USPQ 645, 648 (Fed. Cir. 1985) explains the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as follows:

[A] rejection based upon double patenting of the obviousness type . . . is a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the patent statute) rather than based purely on the precise terms of the statute. The purpose of this rejection is to prevent the extension of the term of a patent, even where an express statutory basis for the rejection is missing, by prohibiting the issuance of the claims in a second patent not patentably distinct from the claims of the first patent. . . . Fundamental to this doctrine is the policy that:

The public should * * * be able to act on the assumption that upon the expiration of the patent it will be free to use not only the invention claimed in the patent but also modifications or variants which would have been obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, taking into account the skill of the art and the prior art other than the invention claimed in the issued patent.
(Emphasis in original.)

[Citation omitted.] Under that facet of the doctrine of double patenting, we must direct our inquiry to whether the claimed invention in the application for the second patent would have been obvious from the subject matter of the claims in the first patent, in light of the prior art.

See also In re Braithwaite, 379 F.2d 594, 600, 154 USPQ 29, 34

(CCPA 1967) (rejection based on obviousness-type double patenting examines whether the difference between what is claimed in application to Braithwaite and what is claimed in the patent to Braithwaite is only such a difference or

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modification as would be obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art in view of the disclosure of Calingaert).

Therefore, contrary to appellants' arguments, it was proper for the examiner to rely on the claims of U.S. Patent No. 5,244,853 to Wang in combination with the disclosure of Johnstone in a rejection based on obviousness-type double patenting. For this reason, the rejection is affirmed.

C. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is based on an interpretation of chemical nomenclature. Specifically, claim 3 is said to be indefinite because "tetraalkyl silicate" finds no support in the "alkoxy silane" of claim 1 since "tetraalkyl silicate" does not contain any alkoxy groups. See Answer, p. 4.

An examination of the specification reveals that (p. 5):

The alkoxy silane is of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ with n ranging, for example, from 0 to 3, where R and R' are also alkyl (e.g., C₁ to C₆ alkyl). Representative compounds include tetraethyl silicate, tetramethyl silicate, tetrabutyl silicate, and dimethoxydiphenylsilane.

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See In re Prater, 415 F.2d 1393, 1404-05, 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969) (claims cannot be read in a vacuum but instead must be read in the light of the specification).

Furthermore, appellants explain that (Brief, p. 4):

The term "silicate", as used in Claim 3, would suggest, to the person in the art, a silicon atom carrying four oxygen substituents, and the additional term "tetraalkyl" would indicate that there are four alkyl groups in the molecule, one alkyl group being on each of those four oxygen atoms.

Appellants rely on a definition of "tetraethyl orthosilicate" appearing in the Dictionary of Organic Compounds to support their position. See Reply Brief, p. 4; attachment to Reply Brief.

We find appellants' position to be persuasive. Therefore, for the reasons set forth above, the rejection of claims 3 and 14² under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is reversed.

D. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

²Claim 14 depends from claim 3.

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Claims 1-4, 6-14 and 16-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as being based on a non-enabling disclosure. Specifically, the examiner maintains that the disclosure is enabling only for claims limited to the intended alkoxy silane compounds set forth in the specification and, for example, in claim 5 (Answer, p. 4).

Appellants argue that (Brief, pp. 5-6):

In setting forth the instant rejection based upon alleged non-enablement, the Examiner has merely contended that disclosure is only enabling for claims limited to the intended alkoxy silane compounds as set forth in the specification and, for example, in Claim 5 without setting forth any reasoning or evidence in support thereof. This is clearly improper, to adequately support a rejection under the first paragraph of § 112, since, as required by the mandate of In re Marzocchi & Horton, 169 U.S.P.Q. 367 (C.C.P.A. 1971) and In re Mayhew, 179 U.S.P.Q. 42 (C.C.P.A. 1973), such reasoning or evidence is required.

In response, the examiner takes the position that no reasoning or evidence in support of the rejection is necessary. See Answer, p. 10. We disagree. As correctly pointed out by appellants, the Court in In re Marzocchi, 439 F.2d 220, 224, 169 USPQ 367, 370 (CCPA 1971), explains:

[I]t is incumbent upon the Patent Office, whenever a rejection on this basis [(35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, enablement)] is made, to explain why it

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doubts the truth or accuracy of any statement in a supporting disclosure and to back up assertions of its own with acceptable evidence or reasoning which is inconsistent with the contested statement.

Since the examiner has failed to present any reasoning or evidence in support of the rejection, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, based on enablement is reversed.

New ground of rejection

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph, as failing to further limit the subject matter of claim 1.

Claim 1 recites:

A catalyst component for ethylene polymerization
formed by . . .
(2) reacting the supported organomagnesium
composition with an alkoxy silane

The specification clearly defines the claimed alkoxy silanes as follows (p. 5, lines 14-16):

The alkoxy silane is of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ with n ranging, for example, from 0 to 3, where R and R' are also alkyl (e.g., C_1 to C_6 alkyl). [Emphasis added.]

Therefore, the alkoxy silanes recited in claim 1 are limited to alkoxy silanes of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ with n ranging

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from 0 to 3 and where R and R' are alkyl. See In re Prater,
415 F.2d 1393, 1404-05, 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969)
(claims cannot be read in a vacuum but instead must be read in
the light of the specification).

However, Claim 5 recites:

A catalyst component as claimed in Claim 1 wherein
the alkoxy silane is of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ where
n ranges from 0 to 3 and R and R' are alkyl.

A comparison of claim 5 and claim 1, when read in light
of the specification, reveals that both claims 1 and 5 are
limited to the same alkoxy silanes. Therefore, claim 5 fails
to further limit the subject matter of claim 1 as required by
35 U.S.C.

§ 112, fourth paragraph.³

³In our judgment, it is entirely appropriate to reject a
dependent claim under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph,
where, as here, that claim does not "specify a further
limitation of the subject matter claimed." See In re Haas,
486 F.2d 1053, 1056, 179 USPQ 623, 625 (CCPA 1973) (action
taken by examiner amounted to a rejection of claims where
patentability of claims had been denied); compare In re
Priest, 582 F.2d 33, 37, 199 USPQ 11, 14 (CCPA 1978) (decision
adversely affecting claim held to be appealable). To the
extent that the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112,
fourth paragraph, is inconsistent with MPEP §§ 608.01(n) and
706.03(k) (7th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2000), we decline to follow
those sections of the Manual. See Ex parte Schwarze, 151 USPQ
426, 428 (Bd. Pat. App. 1966) (disagreement with MPEP noted in

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We agree with the statement of law that "in proceedings before the PTO, claims in an application are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification." In re Sneed, 710 F.2d 1544, 1548, 218 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1983). However, having read the specification in its entirety, we conclude that the broadest reasonable interpretation of "alkoxy silane" is, by appellants' own definition, a compound "of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ with n ranging, for example, from 0 to 3, where R and R' are also alkyl (e.g., C₁ to C₆ alkyl)." See Specification, p. 5, lines 14-16.

In the event that our views relating to this issue of claim interpretation were held to be incorrect, claim 1 would necessarily be broader than claim 5, and a question under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, would arise relating to the metes and bounds of the invention of claim 1. An examination of the specification illustrates this point. First, in the "Summary of the Invention," the compound at issue is described

reaching decision contrary thereto).

as "a tetraalkyl silicate"⁴ (Specification, p. 3, line 21).

In the next paragraph, the compound is described more broadly as an "alkoxysilane" (Specification, p. 3, line 27), and in a subsequent paragraph, the following definition is attached to the term "alkoxy silane" (Specification, p. 5, lines 14-16):

The alkoxy silane is of the formula $R_nSi(OR')_{4-n}$ with n ranging, for example, from 0 to 3, where R and R' are also alkyl (e.g., C_1 to C_6 alkyl). [Emphasis added.]

If "alkoxy silane" is broader than defined in claim 5, what other "alkoxy silanes" are contemplated by appellants in claim 1? One way to interpret claim 1 is to consider it expansively, however, this raises a problem as to what is covered by the claim, i.e., it becomes unclear what "alkoxy silanes" are embraced in claim 1 other than the alkoxy silanes recited by way of the formula in claim 5. Another way is to

⁴As discussed earlier, appellants explain the meaning of the term "tetraalkyl silicate" as follows (Brief, p. 4):

The term "silicate", as used in Claim 3, would suggest, to the person in the art, a silicon atom carrying four oxygen substituents, and the additional term "tetraalkyl" would indicate that there are four alkyl groups in the molecule, one alkyl group being on each of those four oxygen atoms.

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give the term "alkoxy silane" the definition set forth in the specification and recited in claim 5. We are inclined to do the latter.

Adding to the confusion, we are mindful of appellants' reference to "dimethoxydiphenylsilane" in the sentence immediately following the description of "alkoxy silane" (Specification, p. 5, lines 16-18):

Representative compounds include tetraethyl silicate, tetramethyl silicate, tetrabutyl silicate, and dimethoxydiphenylsilane. [Emphasis added.]

However, considering this sentence in light of the definition of "alkoxy silane" immediately preceding it, it appears that appellants would equate phenyl with alkyl. Manifestly, the term "alkyl" cannot be broadened in this manner to include "phenyl" where a clear distortion of an art recognized term would result. It is well settled that while an applicant is entitled to be his own lexicographer, an applicant may not distort a term to mean something it does not mean. In re Hill, 161 F.2d 367, 369, 73 USPQ 482, 484 (CCPA 1947).

Therefore, any reliance on this sentence to expand the meaning of "alkoxy silane" as expressly defined in the specification (p. 5, lines 14-16) is improper.

In other words, on the particular facts of this case, appellants have defined "alkoxy silane" by way of formula on page 5, lines 14 through 16 in the specification and have reiterated that formula in dependent claim 5. In this context, the reference to "dimethoxydiphenylsilane" makes little sense, distorts an art recognized term to mean something that it does not mean, and cannot serve to broaden the definition expressly provided by appellants. If this were not the case, it is entirely unclear what other "representative" compounds are included in the claim 1 recitation of "alkoxy silane."

We recommend that appellants cancel claim 5 and incorporate the limitations thereof into claim 1 in order to avoid any ambiguity.⁵

Conclusion

The rejection of claims 1-4, 6-14 and 16-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, is reversed. The rejection of claims 3 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is

⁵Upon the cancellation of claim 5, the dependency of claims 9 and 16 will also need to be corrected.

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reversed. The rejection of claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is reversed. The rejection of claims 1-22 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting is affirmed. Claim 5 is subject to a new ground of rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph.

In addition to affirming the examiner's rejection of one or more claims, this decision contains a new ground of rejection pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.196(b)(amended effective Dec. 1, 1997, by final rule notice, 62 Fed. Reg. 53131, 53197 (Oct. 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 63, 122 (Oct. 21, 1997)). 37 CFR § 1.196(b) provides, "A new ground of rejection shall not be considered final for purposes of judicial review."

Regarding any affirmed rejection, 37 CFR § 1.197(b) provides:

(b) Appellants may file a single request for rehearing within two months from the date of the original decision

37 CFR § 1.196(b) also provides that the appellants, WITHIN TWO MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE DECISION, must exercise one of the following two options with respect to the new

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ground of rejection to avoid termination of proceedings (37
CFR § 1.197(c)) as to the rejected claims:

(1) Submit an appropriate amendment of the
claims so rejected or a showing of facts relating to
the claims so rejected, or both, and have the matter
reconsidered by the examiner, in which event the
application will be remanded to the examiner. . . .

(2) Request that the application be reheard
under § 1.197(b) by the Board of Patent Appeals and
Interferences upon the same record. . . .

Should the appellants elect to prosecute further before
the Primary Examiner pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.196(b)(1), in
order to preserve the right to seek review under 35 U.S.C. §
141 or 145 with respect to the affirmed rejection, the
effective date of the affirmance is deferred until conclusion
of the prosecution before the examiner unless, as a mere
incident to the limited prosecution, the affirmed rejection is
overcome.

If the appellants elect prosecution before the examiner
and this does not result in allowance of the application,
abandonment or a second appeal, this case should be returned
to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences for final
action on the affirmed rejection, including any timely request
for rehearing thereof.

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No time period for taking any subsequent action in
connection with this appeal may be extended under 37 CFR
§ 1.136(a).

AFFIRMED; 37 CFR § 1.196 (b)

SHERMAN D. WINTERS)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	
)	BOARD OF PATENT
)	APPEALS
)	AND
)	INTERFERENCES
ADRIENE LEPIANE HANLON)	
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KRATZ, Administrative Patent Judge, dissenting-in-part.

I concur with the majority's disposition of the examiner's stated rejections as maintained on appeal. However, I disagree with the introduction of a new ground of rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph pursuant to the provisions of 37 CFR § 1.196(b).

In my view the alkoxy silane of claim 1 is not limited to alkoxy silanes of the formula of claim 5 and, hence, claim 5 does further limit the subject matter of claim 1.

It is well established that "[d]uring patent examination the pending claims must be interpreted as broadly as their terms reasonably allow." In re Zletz, 893 F.2d 319, 321, 13 USPQ2d 1320, 1322 (Fed. Cir. 1989); In re Sneed, 710 F.2d 1544, 1548, 218 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1983)("It is axiomatic that, in proceedings before the PTO, claims in an application are to be given their broadest reasonable interpretation consistent with the specification.") Nevertheless, it is imperative that claim limitations or embodiments appearing in the specification not be read into the claims. Loctite Corp. v. Ultraseal, Ltd., 781 F.2d 861,

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866-67, 228 USPQ 90, 93 (Fed. Cir. 1985); See also In re Zletz, 893 F.2d at 321, 13 USPQ2d at 1322; In re Prater, 415 F.2d 1393, 1404-05, 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969) (before an application is granted, there is no reason to read into the claim the limitations of the specification).

As noted in the majority opinion, dimethoxydiphenyl silane is listed in the specification (p. 5) as a representative compound. That compound is obviously embraced by the generic alkoxy silane language of claim 1, but not embraced by the formula of claim 5. Unlike the majority, it is my view that a skilled artisan would not dismiss the listing of the exemplified dimethoxydiphenyl silane as a distortion of the meaning of "alkyl" in the formula furnished on page 5 of the specification. Indeed, the majority's interpretation of claim 1 could be characterized as the genesis of the perceived distortion. A dimethoxydiphenyl silane would be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art as an alkoxy silane. Based on a reading of the specification as a whole as it would be interpreted by one of ordinary skill in the art, it is clear that the formula introduced on page 5 of the specification is but one description of the disclosed

generic alkoxy silane that does not limit or define, in all instances, the scope thereof. This construction of the claims is consistent with the listed dimethoxydiphenyl silane, original claims 1 and 5, and appellants' argument (brief, carryover paragraph, bridging pages 5 and 6) discussing the breadth and meaning of the term "alkoxy silane" as used in claim 1 (brief, page 5).

The patent statutes and rules do not require the specification must be drafted as a model of clarity in a manner and ordered arrangement as the majority would prefer. Furthermore, claim breadth does not equate with indefiniteness as the majority would seem to suggest.

Finally, the case for introducing a new ground of rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, fourth paragraph pursuant to the provisions of 37 CFR § 1.196(b) as a necessary, appropriate and presumably sustainable rejection that must be introduced to resolve a perceived duplicate claim issue has simply not been made by the majority. An appropriate procedure for the examiner to address duplicate claims is set forth in § 706.03(k) of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP)(7th ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2000).

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Accordingly, I will dissent-in-part from the majority's
opinion.

PETER F. KRATZ)	BOARD OF PATENT
Administrative Patent Judge)	APPEALS
)	AND
)	INTERFERENCES

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Application No. 08/314,568

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APJ KRATZ

DECISION: AFFIRMED; 196 (b)
Send Reference(s): Yes No
or Translation (s)
Panel Change: Yes No
Index Sheet-2901 Rejection(s):

Prepared: October 4, 2001

Draft Final

3 MEM. CONF. Y N

OB/HD GAU

PALM / ACTS 2 / BOOK
DISK (FOIA) / REPORT